



Department of Justice

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CORRECTED VERSION

Department of Justice Announces Nationwide Settlement Agreement with Jo-Ann's Stores, Inc. Creating Sweeping Accessibility Improvements for People with Disabilities

The United States Department of Justice today announced a settlement under Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) with Jo-Ann's Stores, Inc., one of the nation's largest fabric and craft stores. JoAnn's 840 stores will now be accessible to people with disabilities.

"Individuals with disabilities should be able to use retail establishments like other members of the public" said Stephen J. Murphy, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan. "I commend Jo-Ann's for its commitment to take the steps necessary to make its stores accessible. The improvements outlined in this settlement will make it possible for individuals with disabilities to use the stores in an unimpeded manner, and in particular, navigate the aisles freely."

"Providing the same retail shopping experience for individuals with disabilities that other patrons enjoy delivers on the promise of the ADA," said Wan J. Kim, Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division. "I commend Jo-Ann's Stores for their commitment to working with us to make their stores more accessibility for the entire community."

The Agreement resolves alleged violations of the ADA. The Justice Department initially conducted an investigation after it received complaints about accessibility at Jo-Ann's stores from individuals with disabilities in several states. The investigation concluded that many of the spaces and elements of Jo-Ann's stores were not in compliance with the ADA. Jo-Ann's has worked actively and cooperatively with the Department throughout its investigation and to reach this Settlement Agreement, which resolves complaints from the Eastern District of Michigan, the Northern District of California, and the Eastern District of Wisconsin.

The Agreement covers entrances, the size of aisles, merchandise display areas, fabric cutting areas, check out counters, and other spaces and elements at new and existing stores. It requires Jo-Ann's to:

- ✓ hire an ADA Consultant to assist Jo-Ann's with implementation of the Settlement Agreement and designate a corporate ADA Coordinator;
- ✓ conduct a survey of every Jo-Ann's store for compliance with the ADA over a four year period;
- ✓ conform all elements of each store that deviate from the ADA Standards for Accessible Design or that are barriers to access surveyed within one year of the store's survey; and,
- ✓ complete ADA training of all personnel involved in the implementation of the Agreement and all store managers, and incorporate ADA training into Jo-Ann's training curriculum for all new employees.

Anyone interested in finding out more about the ADA or the agreement can call the Justice Department's toll-free ADA Information Line at 800-514-0301 or 800-514-0383 (TTY), or access its ADA Web site at <http://www.ada.gov>.